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## Washington's Transportation Plan – Bicycle and Pedestrian Element

Walking and bicycling are integral parts of the transportation system. People walk and bike to commute to work, and school, for utilitarian trips such as visiting friends, shopping or other personal errands, and to make connections to transit or other inter-modal facilities. Most of us are pedestrians at one time or another every day and all modes of transportation include a pedestrian component. In some areas of the state, walking and bicycling already have significant numbers of users. In Seattle, 16 percent of commute trips are walking and bicycling trips. In some parts of the city, bicycling and walking make up 20 percent of the commute trip.

The state, local communities and the public have much to gain from a transportation system that supports more walking and biking. There are immediate and long-term health benefits for the individual (including the prevention of heart disease, diabetes, obesity and traffic related accidents). There are the environmental health benefits of fewer automobiles polluting the environment. Walking and biking also have an economic impact. There is potential for the reduction of expenses related to owning and operating a car. There is potential to enhance economic vitality by providing for walkability in downtown commercial districts and the fact that bicycle and pedestrian facilities are much less expensive than auto-centric facilities to build and maintain.

Past planning efforts at the state level have identified two primary bicycle and pedestrian goals that are also consistent with federal guidance. The two goals serve as the foundation for the objectives in this plan— increasing (1) the numbers of people and (2) the safety of people bicycling and walking. This document addresses those goals and will serve to meet state (RCW 47.06.100) and federal requirements for bicycle transportation and pedestrian walkways plan.

### ***What is the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) goal for bicycling and walking?***

Over the next 20 years, the FHWA goal that Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) and other state departments of transportation will be accountable for is to increase biking and walking to at least 15 percent of all trips, and simultaneously reduce the number of bicyclists and pedestrians killed or injured in traffic crashes by at least 10 percent.

### ***How will Washington State accomplish the FHWA goal?***

Improve bicycling and walking conditions through funding and policy change

#### **Funding**

- A. WSDOT should target bicycle and pedestrian funding to priorities that improve mobility and safety, especially for the young and the old.

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- B. WSDOT, Regional Transportation Planning Organizations, Metropolitan Planning Organizations (hereinafter regional agencies), cities and counties should work towards a more balanced distribution of transportation funds that includes an increase in investments to make walking and bicycling safer.
- C. Washington State Departments of Transportation, Health, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Washington Traffic Safety Commission (WTSC) and other partner agencies and organizations should work with legislative staff to identify, or create, a consistent state level funding source for Safe Routes to School projects.

## **Policy**

- D. WSDOT will work to review, and update, the following documents, incorporating bicycle and pedestrian best practices:
  - WSDOT *Design Manual* 1020 and 1025
  - *Manual for Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD)(State and Federal)*
  - *Local Agency Guidelines*
  - Maintenance Accountability Plan
- E. WSDOT, cities and counties should work to improve connections with SEPA/NEPA to enable sidewalks, on street bicycle facilities and shared use paths to be viewed as mitigation options.
- F. WSDOT will work with Community Trade and Economic Development to provide technical assistance to cities and counties to ensure that bicycle and pedestrian needs are included in their comprehensive plans and zoning codes.
- G. WSDOT will investigate ways to monitor compliance with state bicycle and pedestrian laws and policies related to facility design, funding and development.
- H. WSDOT, school districts, cities and counties will work to ensure safe walk routes exist between schools and their surrounding neighborhoods.
- I. WSDOT, regional agencies, cities and counties should adopt a complete streets policy and work to ensure that walking and cycling for transportation are a vital – real option as part of our transportation system and are incorporated as an integral part of all other transportation systems at the state, regional and local levels by:
  - Including safe connections, facilities and convenient access to pedestrian and bicycle facilities (bicycle covered-parking facilities, racks, etc.) at transit centers, transit stops, airports, rail terminals, ferry terminals and park and ride lots.
  - Retrofitting existing roadways with paved shoulders or bicycle lanes, sidewalks, and safe crossings as appropriate
  - Creating new and maintaining existing corridors for bicycle and pedestrian transportation purposes.
  - Restoring linkages when they have been severed by a highway project.
- J. When a state transportation project and a local roadway interface (i.e. off ramp), relevant plans, goals and design standards will be incorporated.

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- K. WSDOT, cities and counties will work to improve universal access including Americans with Disabilities Act compliance on or near state and local roads and will continue to provide guidance on ADA compliance.
- L. WSDOT will work with Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation and other agencies and organizations to develop bicycle signage and associated route maps for key tourism destinations (e.g., Mt Rainier Route, Coastal Route, etc.).

Foster a culture of dignity and respect for bicyclists and pedestrians in Washington.

## **Organizational Development**

- A. The Criminal Justice Training Commission should work with WTSC and Washington State Patrol to improve academy and in-service bicycling and pedestrian education to officers at the state and local levels.
- B. WSDOT in partnership with the Department of Licensing, WTSC, Department of Health and Washington State Patrol, regional agencies, cities and counties should work to review existing state laws related to bicycles and pedestrians and make recommendations for improvement.

## **Public Education**

- C. WTSC should partner with other state agencies, schools, and local governments to improve the availability of safety education materials to students in K-12 and targeted population groups on appropriate pedestrian and bicycle actions.
- D. WSDOT in partnership with the WTSC, the Department of Licensing and other agencies will work to institute a program that would educate drivers, cyclists and pedestrians of the rules of the road including the provision of more information in the driver's manual and exam.

Promote the advancement of knowledge and practice within Washington's agencies, jurisdictions and organizations.

- A. WSDOT in partnership with regional agencies and local governments will work to create a statewide bicycle and pedestrian inventory of existing facilities.
- B. WSDOT and Department of Health will implement a survey tool to obtain better information on bicycle and pedestrian travel behavior and patterns.
- C. WSDOT will maintain an information clearinghouse through such technologies as the Internet where citizens and local governments can access up to date information on bicycle and pedestrian issues, practices, and standards.
- D. State and federal agencies should continue to support local pilot projects and provide technical and financial assistance to local agencies on bicycle and pedestrian design and site location (e.g., capital improvements, visioning, planning)
- E. WSDOT will provide information and, when practical, funding to communities to conduct bicycle and pedestrian needs assessments.

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